

The Brooklyn Jewish Center Review

THE ZIONIST CONGRESS
MAY BE RESPONSIBLE FOR
THE FUTURE OF ZIONISM

AN HEROIC JEW, DON ISAAC
ABRAVANEL, WAS BORN
500 YEARS AGO

THE ABRAVANEL "ROSH
AMONAH" IN ENGLISH

CONSERVATIVE JUDAISM

THE SUN AND I

JEWISH EVENTS REVIEWED

MAY

1937

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BROOKLYN JEWISH CENTER REVIEW

Vol. XVII

MAY, 1937 — SIVAN 5697

No. 35

THE VALUE OF THE CON- SECRATION SERVICE

WE have just concluded the second year in the work of our Consecration Class. It was a new experiment in our Center, and many were fearful of this innovation. Readers of the *Review* will be interested to know the fine effects that we can thus far note as a result of the instruction which these girls have received.

At the close of the season last year the girls, of their own accord, banded themselves together and this year they have met bi-weekly with their Consecration teacher for an intensive study of the Jews in America. It was not only the actual course of study that they pursued, but the fact that the girls continue to maintain their companionship and friendship, and continue to remain under the guidance and inspiration of their teacher for another year that shows at once that the service has had a telling influence.

We are confident that this year's members of the class will continue their studies during the coming season. In this way we are helping to train a generation of young Jewish women who will understand their place in Jewish life and their duty to the Jewish people. Looking at the results objectively, we feel that it can honestly be said that this new venture is one of the most significant to have been adopted by our Center.

SHEVUOTH, THE FESTIVAL OF THE TORAH

THE festival of Shevuoth, which we shall observe on Sunday and Monday of the coming week, is one that held a cherished place in the heart of the Jew. Passover, which was also precious to him, marked the day when he became physically free. But the Jew instinctively felt that physical freedom alone was not enough for

him. Shevuoth marks the day when he became spiritually free. It is the *Zeman Matan Torasenu*, the season that commemorates the giving of the Torah on Mount Sinai, when the Jew found that freedom which was to nurture his heart, his mind and his soul. It was on that historic day in *Sivan* that the Jew dedicated himself to the study and to the living of those ideals, of those lofty principles, which his Torah symbolized.

Here in America, we Jews can indeed celebrate the Festival of Passover in all its significance. For here we have found freedom from all forms of physical bondage. Alas, the Festival of *Shevuoth* has lost much of its meaning and significance for many a Jew in this land. While enjoying physical, political and economic freedom he is nevertheless a slave in spirit, having surrendered much of his own culture, his own literature, his own ideals, his own ways of life.

Let us hope that on this historic festival, we may once again prove true to our own selves. Let us rededicate ourselves to our Torah—our priceless heritage, which still holds forth for us, and for all the world, that message which can bring peace and blessedness to all mankind.

TO REV. ALAN M. FAIRBANK, A GOOD FRIEND AND LOYAL NEIGHBOR

THE members of the Center will be sorry to learn that the Rev. Alan M. Fairbank is leaving the pastorate of the St. Paul Congregational Church on New York Avenue and Sterling Place, to accept a call to become the minister of the Bunker Hill Congregational Church in Waterbury, Connecticut.

The Rev. Fairbank has endeared himself to all the people of this community, regardless of faith or creed. His high idealism, his fine conception and appreciation of American democracy, and his beautiful understanding

of the true and fundamental values of religion have made him an outstanding spiritual leader in our community.

We of the Center have found him above all a good neighbor, sharing many of the dreams for a finer and more spiritualized communal life that animated so many of our group. Serving in the same denomination in which served our lamented friend Dr. S. Parkes Cadman, he has proven himself a true disciple of that great and unforgettable leader.

We regret his going, and want to take this opportunity to extend to him our sincerest good wishes for a very successful ministry in his new sphere of activity. We shall always be glad to hear from him and to feel that in him we have a real friend.

—I. H. L.

RAISING THE STANDARD OF GIVING

Of great significance in the present campaign for funds conducted jointly by the Brooklyn and New York Federations of Jewish Charities is the fact that larger contributions are being announced than heretofore. There is a likelihood that the enthusiasm for the merger of these two organizations prompted many to part with a greater portion of their wealth. Others will ascribe it to a desire on the part of Brooklyn donors to meet the more generous spirit displayed by their co-religionists in Manhattan. Be that as it may, it points to a tendency to raise the standard of giving in Jewish communal life, which should be more than welcome.

Most of us will recall, in the not too far distant past, when men and women would vie with each other in the display of generosity by making substantial donations to various appeals made to them. There was a spirit of competition in doing good which was most encouraging. The community made greater demands on the individual, and many learned to give thousands of dollars where heretofore the giving of hundreds was usual.

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With the coming of the depression the situation took a different trend. It became fashionable to plead poverty and to abstain from contributing to worthwhile causes or movements. We boasted of our financial losses but took every precaution not to state what we still possessed. Instead of responding to appeals we were content to rest on our past donations and that supplied the necessary ease of mind and rest of conscience.

We greet the change in the field of Jewish contribution. It is the healthy sign of a return to normal Jewish life.

—J. G.

THOMAS MANN ON THE JEWS*

ANTI-Semitism is the corollary and catch-word of present-day mass-humanity and mass-mysticism; both obscure characteristics and shot through with much bestiality. It is not a thought, nor a word; it has no human voice, it is mere bawling. And the spiritually-minded man, the man who has himself in hand, does not join in bawling; he waits until it ceases for a moment and in the ensuing silence he speaks his nay.

This nay, which is by no means a yea to all and every type of Jew, is the expression of a natural and a necessary distinction of the spirit which has nothing to do with presumption and which the spiritually-minded does not renounce without dishonor to himself or without thrusting life itself into misfortune. We in Germany have experienced what misery it leads to when its intellectuals, its scientists, its writers and philosophers descend down to the rabble for the sake of an unfor-

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*Text in part of the speech delivered by Herr Mann at the Free Synagogue on April 18.

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ALONG THE BORSCHT CIRCUIT

By WILLIAM H. BIRNIE

(Reprinted from the N. Y. World-Telegram)

EDDIE J. ROSS, 39, who is normally one of the more dynamic inhabitants of Broadway, stared glumly at the photograph of a nude over his desk and declared he didn't think he could stand the pace another moment. Anyhow, he was positive he couldn't get through the next two weeks without a collapse. What was distressing Mr. Ross was the fact that his business was booming.

Along with about a dozen other theatrical agents, most of them clustered around Broadway and 46th Street, he specializes in booking performers for the hundreds of summer camps and hotels in the Catskills, where anyone with \$50 or \$60 can spend a two-week vacation with a floor show, more or less, in the casino every night. *Variety* calls it the "Borscht Circuit," because borscht, which is a thick beet soup popular in Jewish households, is supposed to be a favored dish among the guests.

Mr. Ross verges on collapse every year around the first of May when the resort owners come around to shop for talent. Their appearance is one of the inevitable signs of spring in Manhattan, as reliable as the sprouting of geraniums on window ledges and blissful couples on top of Fifth Avenue buses. But in the eyes of Mr. Ross, a resort owner is an extremely exasperating creature.

"They got crazy ideas," he sighed. "They expect to get Lawrence Tibbett and Gypsy Rose Lee, and they want to pay them with room and board. It is very discouraging."

He was particularly distressed a while ago when an owner offered to pay a social director \$250 for the season. The social director wanted \$300, so Mr. Ross suggested a compromise at \$275. The owner could not see it, and Mr. Ross shouted, in desperation:

"Listen, if you won't tell nobody, I'll throw in Eddie Cantor for five bucks extra."

"Okay," said the owner. "I'll pay the five bucks out of my own pocket."

Another thing which depresses Mr. Ross is the fact that good actors make

bun waiters, and vice versa. He says he could place any number of tenors, if they could only handle salads, and any number of blues singers with a talent for dusting rooms. But art being as aristocratic and stubborn as it is, the best he can do is to place busboys who don't mind taking occasional roles in the theatricals.

"That is putting the cart before the horse," he observed, sadly, "but so what?"

With the demise of vaudeville, the Borscht Circuit is receiving a grudging consideration from Broadway as a training ground for performers. As a matter of fact, there's an imposing array of theatrical topnotchers among its alumni. Moss Hart, for example, who co-authored "You Can't Take It With You" with George S. Kaufman, and Arthur Kober, who recorded his own experiences at a Berkshire camp in "Having Wonderful Time."

Clifford Odets wrote skits and appeared in them at three or four casinos. Gertrude Niesen had a job as a waitress and did some singing on the side—until she got fired because the proprietor thought her voice wasn't going over.

Henry Youngman, a gaunt, drawling fellow who has emerged as a master of ceremonies at several night clubs during the last few months, has been playing borscht for ten years. He started out for room and board alone, and last summer, at White Row Lake, Livingston Manor, he got \$100 a week, plus room and board for his wife and baby. That is just about tops in borscht.

"It's all right for a few years," he said the other day during a rehearsal for a Kate Smith radio program, "but you won't find me back on the circuit while I have enough money to pay my rent somewhere else."

"Most of the camps and hotels, according to Helen Levy, of the Varsity Entertainment Bureau in the Palace Theatre Building, hire an entire staff, which is under the social director, also known as the headman.

There is usually a prima donna, a blues singer, a tenor, a dance team and

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THE COMING ZIONIST CONGRESS MAY BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE FUTURE OF ZIONISM

By WILLIAM I. SIEGEL

FOUR decades have passed since the first World Zionist Congress at Basle made the momentous declaration which has since been the political policy of world Jewry and has also set the frame of its economic trend. These forty years have been charged with a high enthusiasm among Zionists. The resultant achievements have been notable and portentous. At the same time the years have been complicated by constant disappointment to such an extent that it is at least debatable on which side of the scale the balance falls. And certainly it must be conceded by even the most optimistic Zionist that the close of the period finds Jewry and Zionism in a condition which to a great extent belies the high promise evoked in the middle years by the Balfour Declaration and the Mandate.

The facts of the contemporary scene lay the stage for the forthcoming Twentieth World Zionist Congress. These conditions also give perspective to the problems which the Congress will be called upon to consider. In turn, these conditions therefore inevitably confer an epochal importance on the decisions which the Congress may reach. To no small extent, this Congress will of historic necessity find itself responsible for the entire future of Zionism. It is not an exaggeration to say that history is now offering to Jewry perhaps its last opportunity of working out its destiny along the lines of the Basle program. Wise judgment will facilitate the fruitful acceptance of this opportunity. Inappropriate decisions may hopelessly entangle Zionism amid a welter of internal Jewish dissension and subject it to an impenetrable wall of external opposition.

It therefore becomes highly important to understand the problems which in all probability will form the major part of the Congress agenda. Basically, they are three-fold in nature. Of the most obvious immediate importance is the problem of the British interpretation of the Mandate and of the acts and policies of Great Britain consequent upon such interpretation. As a corollary, there will be a consideration of the Royal Commission Report, soon to be made, with its possible recommendation for cantonization, re-

striction of immigration, etc. Next in degree perhaps at the present moment, but in the long run certain to be of equal and perhaps greater importance, is the problem of the relations, now and in the future, between the Yishub and the Arab population of Palestine. Of the least consequence at first glance, but ultimately of high significance is the problem of the relationship in the Golith and in Eretz Israel among the various groups of Israel itself.

The Congress will find the problem of Great Britain and the Mandate one of extraordinary complexity. There can hardly be a doubt that the League of Nations intended in the fullest degree to create a Jewish National Homeland in Palestine and that it thus expressed itself in the exact terms of the Mandate. If words have an unchangeable integrity, the conclusion follows from the stipulation that "Palestine is to be placed under such political administration and economic conditions as will secure the establishment of the Jewish National Home and the development of self-governing institutions." To argue over the construction or to fritter away the import of such language is to exhibit either a lack of understanding of the purpose of the Mandate, or purposely to enslave it. That is a position which the Congress both in law and in morals might very well assume, and on the basis of which it might demand of Great Britain a literal compliance with the terms and intent of the Mandate.

But the Congress must be realistic. Events of the immediate past have shown that for all practical purposes the League of Nations is Great Britain; abetted by France in matters of mutual interest, but otherwise helped to domination over the League by a cynical indifference on the part of the other great powers. To follow the analogy of a trust, an appeal to the League of Nations would be as fruitless as an appeal by a beneficiary to a venal court. An appeal from Alexander drunk to Alexander intoxicated could be no more useless. Witness the sad and shameful spectacle of Abyssinia!

One is compelled to conclude that to a very large extent the method of approach with respect to the British administration of the Mandate lies principally if not solely in a judicious process of informing, along all proper channels, British public opinion. (We may well thank the destiny of the Jewish people, whatever it is or whatever it may yet be, for the fact that England is one of the few remaining countries in which public opinion still plays a major part in the formation of governmental policy). And yet, the Congress must at the same time realize that Great Britain has many distracting problems of imperial importance, which to a considerable extent engage the interest even of the man on the street. It is questionable just how much Palestine, and the Jewish rights and interests in Palestine, will appeal to that typical moulder of British governmental policy. The Congress must find an answer to that problem in mass-psychology. The Congress must determine this delicate question: whether to stand upon the strict letter of the Mandate or whether in appearance at least and temporarily to remit part of our insistence upon law and justice in the hope and for the purpose of engaging the sympathy of British public opinion, and thus to compel the formulation of a new imperial policy with respect to Palestine.

It is not meant to suggest by this that the Congress must, or even should, sacrifice to the demands of expediency one tithe or particle of Jewish right as conferred by the Mandate. If that were necessary in order to win a concession as a matter of grace rather than as a matter of right, then probably the Congress would be obliged to stake the entire future of Zionism on a bold if desperate demand for justice. To submit, for instance, to cantonization as a solution would be suicidal to our legitimate hopes. To accept a rigid codification of the present definition of "absorptive capacity" would be almost as bad. To acquiesce in a ban on land purchase would be treasonable. It is only meant to be sug-

gested here that perhaps *festina lente* is for the moment not a counsel of cowardice. At any rate, the problem is certainly there.

As for the Arab question, obviously the Congress must recognize its grave implications for the future as well as its present aspect. Congress must not lose sight of the forest because of the trees. The problem will not be simplified by the fact that the outrages of 1936 are so close in point of time and so vivid in memory. It is difficult to be judicious amid the *zing* of bullets, and when the groans of the wounded and the countenances of the dead are etched in memory's ear and eye. And yet it is clear that no matter what the provocation to resentment may be, the problems of Arabic-Jewish relationships must be met with a statesmanlike view to the future and with as complete a forgetting of the past as is humanly possible. The Yishub will have to live with the Arabs in the future in Eretz Israel and must live with them on the basis of understanding and peace. We cannot contemplate the Yishub permanently behind the walls of a stockade.

It may be suggested that that is solely the problem of the Yishub, since it lives with the problem. That, however, is taking a narrow view of the situation. The present day Yishub is an advance guard of the Jewish National Homeland. It is a noble guard which has won the right to Jewry's complete admiration by its many sacrifices and its great achievements. Nevertheless, it still remains only an earnest of the vaster number of Jews who will eventually form the reborn Jewish National Homeland. Since there will be others to share in the problem of living with the Arab, their representatives in the Congress must give thought in advance to the kind of land in which they will live.

One is moved to the hope that the Congress will consider the question with no feeling of vindictiveness and with genuine vision of statesmanship. The Arab and Jew of today may have drawn between them a chasm of blood; wisdom must bridge that chasm somehow and generate good-will and mutual respect and co-operation. The problem must be viewed *sub-specie aeternitatis*, as one affecting generations as yet unborn. In this sense it is perfectly fair to say that the coming Congress is a trustee for the whole future of practical Zionism.

Perhaps the most complex and delicate of all the problems (because it is the least tangible) with which the Congress must deal is that of the feuds which have arisen among the Jewish people. In two thousand years of oppression we have learned admirably many lessons. We have learned to endure physical persecution and insult, we have formed the habit of suffering. We have managed to grow great in cabined and cribbed spaces. We have in many ways conferred blessings even upon those who have scorned us. Withal, one lesson we have not yet been able to learn: the lesson of unity among ourselves.

It is the everlasting tragedy of Israel that when the call to battle comes, "To your tents, Oh Israel," we disperse all over the field and drivel away our strength by internal bickering and fruitless posturing. So it is today. There are 4,000,000 Jews in Poland who are being decimated (and worse) by an economic boycott. There are still 500,000 Jews in Germany who have been reduced to a Helot class. The Jews of the Balkan countries know not what the morrow will bring in terms of vicious anti-Semitism. Even in England and America there are perceptible growths of the danger. In Palestine, the Yishub faces acute dangers which at times appear to render the future problematical. And amidst this panorama of misery and degradation and futility, the Jews of the world in their relationship to Zionism have

coalesced into embattled groups who at least appear to hate each other more than they fear the common oppressor.

One group insists upon the pre-eminence of a religious motive for the re-establishment of the Homeland, and upon the religious mechanism in the process of development. Another body sees in the Jewish National Homeland merely another place for the operation of Marxian Socialism. A third unit verges dangerously upon the fascist ideology. Other groups have their own isms and ologies; and the tragedy is that all of these groups waste in the vilification of the others the energy and gifts of strength and purpose which should be lavished only on the mutual ideal to which they all pledge allegiance. It would be bad if this poison were coursing only through the veins of the body of Israel in the Golith. It is worse that the sores of the strife afflict the Yishub. And it is infinitely worse that future immigration into Palestine will carry this virus in increasing measure into the life of Eretz Israel. It is therefore a matter of the highest moment that the Congress should consider all of the aspects of this internecine strife and take some means to bring peace. Shalom must in Zionist life become more than merely a word of greeting!

It is true that with respect to the last problem, the 19th World Congress attempted a solution in the form of the Territorial Union. The plan
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THE JEWISH POPULATION OF LONDON

The average Jewish population in the New London Survey Area, in 1931-1933 was:

Age Group	Males	Females
0—	4,689	3,915
5—	13,501	14,320
15—	15,190	21,882
25—	15,642	23,276
35—	12,335	15,340
45—	13,915	15,955
55—	9,869	12,221
65—	4,408	6,266
75 and over	993	1,587
Total	90,542	114,762

Grand Total: 205,304

The proportion of the sexes in the Jewish population were:

Greater London—Per cent

Males	44.57
Females	55.43

It should be borne in mind that where there is a Jewish population, all available statistics show everywhere, and especially in Central and Western Europe, that the birth-rate of the Jewish population is lower than that of the general population. Does the Jewish population of this country (England), and especially of London, show the same tendency? This important question cannot be answered until statistics such as those of circumcisions, from which birth-rates may be estimated, are available.

AN HEROIC JEW, DON ISAAC ABRAVANEL, WAS BORN 500 YEARS AGO

TWO years ago, there was a widespread response to the celebration of the natal anniversary of the great philosopher and codifier, Moses the son of Maimon. This year, we are about to commemorate the five hundredth anniversary of the birth of another great hero of Israel, the renowned scholar and statesman Isaac ben Judah Abrabanel.

The five centuries of Jewish history in the Spanish peninsula form the most glorious, most glamorous period of our life in the Diaspora. During that time there were Jewish statesmen, Jewish poets, philosophers, scientists, mathematicians. With the gradual spread of Christian influence and the disappearance of Moslem rule the splendor of that epoch began to dim, and with the expulsion of the Spanish Jews in 1492 its glory departed never to reappear. It was during the period of sunset of the Jewish Spanish era that Don Isaac Abrabanel, the last of the long list of Jewish scholar-statesmen to arise in Spain, was born in Lisbon, in the year 1437.

The family of Abrabanel, or Abravanel, was one of the most distinguished in Spain. It is said that the ancestor of the Abravanel's settled in Spain immediately after the capture of Jerusalem by Titus in the year 70 B.C. The members of the family claimed their descent from King David. This claim was generally conceded to them by their contemporaries.

For many generations Abravanel's occupied a prominent position in Seville and in other mediaeval Spanish towns. The grandfather of Don Isaac, Samuel Abravanel, seems to have been forced into baptism in the year 1391, and for a time lived the life of a Marrano (converted Jew) in Spain, yet during all this time he displayed his interest in Jewish affairs through his benevolent support of Jewish charities and in particular through his continual assistance to Jewish scholars and scholarship. Eventually, he left Spain and settled in Portugal where he could openly live the life of the Jew without interference. There his son, Judah Abravanel, became treasurer to a prince.

By DR. ELIAS N. RABINOWITZ

Born to wealth and distinction, the youthful Isaac showed a marked precocity, and before the age of twenty he composed a treatise on divine Providence. Yet his early writings, as well as his later works, do not display great originality of thought. He was bright but not brilliant, a realist but not a dreamer, sober-minded but not given to metaphysical speculation. Although he wrote philosophy he was less the creative thinker and more the solid business man who thoroughly understood finance and affairs of state. Even in his youth, however, he fully appreciated the beauties of his Faith and at all times he was inspired by a devotion to his Jewish heritage and an undying love for his people.

His unusual financial ability soon came to the notice of Alfonso V, King of Portugal. Alfonso was an amiable and benevolent potentate, during whose reign the discriminating laws against the Jews, though on the statutes, were not carried into effect. Jews occupied high places and exerted great influence throughout the kingdom. Abravanel's years of service under this kindly prince were the happiest in his varied and stormy life. In glowing terms, Don Isaac himself describes the pleasantness of his existence while in the service of Alfonso. The benefits of his happy life were not limited, however, to his own person and family, but extended to his less fortunate brethren. He was rich, he occupied a high position, and he was influential, therefore he used his favorable estate for the improvement of the conditions of others. When the Portuguese captured the port of Azrillo, in Morocco, and carried off many captives, Don Isaac not only collected funds to redeem the Jews among the slaves, but also gave of his own bounty and exerted himself in behalf of these unfortunates until they were able to earn a living.

But this happy state was not to continue. Upon the death of King Alfonso there was a change — an unexpected change. Don Isaac had been held in high esteem not only by his Jewish



Don Isaac Abravanel
(Engraving by courtesy of "The American Hebrew")

brethren but by many worthy and powerful non-Jews, the most outstanding among whom were the famous Portuguese scholar, John Seizira, and the wealthy Duke of Braganza. The friendship of this Duke, a noble and generous prince, led to Abravanel's undoing. When King Joad II ascended the throne, he was jealous of the power his cousin, the Duke of Braganza, exerted because of the love and esteem in which he was held by his Portuguese subjects. The King therefore falsely accused him of attempting to seize the throne with the aid of Ferdinand and Isabella, and the unhappy duke was found guilty of the charge and executed. All his vast wealth was confiscated. Immediately after the death of Braganza Don Isaac received a summons from the new king to appear before him and would have met a similar fate, but some of his Christian friends warned him of the king's intention in time and he fled. Soldiers pursued him to the Spanish border but were unable to overtake him. All his property was confiscated but his wife and three sons were permitted to leave Portugal unmolested.

Upon his arrival on Spanish soil, Abravanel frankly and bravely despatched an epistle to Joad II, in which he defended not only his innocence but also the innocence of his friend the Duke.

Strengthened in his belief in divine Providence, and thankful to God for the miraculous intervention which saved him from almost certain death, Don Isaac rejoiced in his heart that an opportunity was at last given him to apply himself to his exegetical work on the Prophetic books of the Bible.

In spite of his exile and the loss of his property, he set to work. But soon the Jewish community of the old city of Toledo, apprised of the presence of the distinguished refugee, gave him a hearty welcome. Before long, he was forced to abandon his retirement, and was again drawn into a life of activity. First, Don Abraham Senior, King Ferdinand's tax farmer, called upon him for assistance, and then the King himself, fully aware of his unusual talents as a financier, pressed him into service.

It was in the year 1483 that Abravanel arrived in Spain. For almost a decade after that he was occupied with Spanish financial affairs, raising funds for the king's wars, scrutinizing expenditures, balancing accounts. Ferdinand and Isabella were determined upon the Christianization of Spain, and of the elimination of the Moor and the Jew. It is ironical that the man engaged in the organization of Ferdinand's finances was a staunch and unequivocal follower of the religion which the king desired to eradicate. However, Abravanel continued to serve his monarch faithfully, championing the cause of his brethren whenever necessary.

In the year 1492, the same year in which a new continent was discovered for Spain, the Moslem city of Granada fell before the superior forces of the army of Ferdinand. Urged on by the fanatical devilry of the infamous Grand Inquisitor, Torquemada, the king and queen determined to rid the kingdom of all infidels, Jew or Moslem. Forced mass baptism was not considered practical any longer; expulsion was favored as the only feasible plan. On March 31, 1492, the decree of banishment of all Jews in the dominions of Ferdinand and Isabella was issued. Don Isaac, highly esteemed by the two monarchs both for his character and for his valuable services, immediately came to the court to plea for a recall of the decree. He even offered a large sum of money to replenish the depleted coffers of the king's exchequer. Ferdinand was visibly impressed. He needed more money to pursue his policies. But then, Torquemada suddenly appeared before the royal pair. Crucifix in hand, he upbraided them for what he termed the kiss of Iscariot. The die was cast. Enforcement of the royal decree was ordered.

It is needless here to enter into detail as to the consequences of this cruel decision. Despair, tragedy, death and

destruction followed. Although he had the alternative of remaining in Spain, Don Isaac preferred to cast his lot with his unfortunate co-religionists. Like the traditional Wandering Jew, he left his native peninsula and moved onward to Naples, Italy. Homeless now, almost penniless, he again betook himself sedulously to his literary work. But Ferdinand, King of Naples, aware of his services to the king of Spain, befriended him too, and engaged him as his financial advisor. Later, upon the capture of Naples by the French, Don Isaac followed his royal protector to Messina in Sicily. Six years before his death he returned to Italy where for a while he was occupied in bringing about trade negotiations and a pact between Portugal and the Republic of Venice. He died in Venice in 1509.

In spite of Abravanel's manifold occupations, he was a prolific writer. He wrote commentaries on the Bible, treatises on philosophy, apologetics, Messianic treatises. In his philosophic works he espouses the cause of Maimonides against his detractors, and defends the thirteen creeds against the

attacks of Crescas and Albo. In his religious ideas he is intransigently orthodox and spares no words in his attack on the more rationalistic views of Al-Balag and Gersonides, Palquera and Narloni. Even Maimonides, whom he otherwise upholds, is criticized for his attempt to explain the Biblical miracles in a natural manner.

On one point, however, he very strongly upholds the views of Maimonides, namely, in regard to his opinions on the appearance of a personal Messiah. The miserable condition of the Spanish exiles was such that hopelessness and despair were usual. As if to counteract this condition and to inspire his brethren with a new spirit and renewed hopes, he wrote three books on the Messianic future. Abravanel did his best work in the field of Biblical exegesis. In his Bible commentaries he applied his experience, obtained through many years of practical work. His knowledge of man and politics led him to believe that it is insufficient to treat the text of the books of the Bible merely from a re-

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THE ROSH AMONAH OF DON ISAAC ABRAVANEL

The following is Chapter 5 of the only English translation of an Abravanel work available. It was first published in the Cincinnati "American Israelite," edited by Isaac M. Wise, in 1862.

The eight objections of Isaac Abravanel, against the fundamental doctrines by Moses Maimonides

BESIDES the objections stated before I have seen fit to urge others not stated by the aforementioned authors against the great Rabbi, in regard to what he wrote in his book of *Madda* and his commentary to the *Mishna*, concerning these fundamental doctrines and commandments.

The first objection is this: Why does Maimonides mention some and omit others of the fundamental doctrines he sets down in his commentary to the *Mishna*, in his Book of *Madda*, which makes a portion of his "Decisions concerning the principles of the Law?" In the first chapter of the said book he mentions the existence of the Deity, His unity and the removal of corpora- tion, which make the first three of his fundamental doctrines. In another chapter of that book he mentions the belief in prophecy, the superiority

of Moses as a prophet, and the divinity of the Law, which are three more of his fundamental doctrines. In the ninth and other chapters of that book he mentions the eternity of the Law. Thus he counts, only seven of his fundamental doctrines, omitting the six others, viz: that God alone is first cause, that He alone must be worshipped, that he is omniscient, reward and punishment, the coming of the Messiah, and the resurrection of the dead; all of which he mentions in his commentary to the *Mishna* and omits in his "Principles of the Law." This appears very strange as though cardinal doctrines and principles of the Law were two different things.

The second objection is this: In his "Principles of the Law" he mentions several omitted in his commentary to *Mishna*, as, to love the Lord, to fear Him, to walk in His ways, to venerate the sanctuary and many other matters, philosophical or theological. If

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CONSERVATIVE JUDAISM

By DR. MAX ARZT

(The following unusually interesting statement on Conservative Judaism is reprinted — in somewhat condensed form—from the pamphlet published to celebrate the "Bar Mitzvah Jubilee" of the Young Peoples League of the United Synagogue of America, recently held.)

THE task assigned to me is freighted with difficulties. I am asked to describe and define a movement within American Judaism which has thus far resisted every attempt made at subjecting it to rigid definition. Even the designation 'Conservative Judaism,' though widely used, has never been officially adopted. The leaders of the movement scrupulously avoid the term in their official pronouncements. They use the less sectarian and perhaps the more evasive terms Traditional Judaism or Historical Judaism. Conservative Judaism is the name popularly given to a movement which originated among those who objected to the radical tendencies within Reform Judaism. They were alarmed at the denuding process whereby Reform Judaism had abrogated the dietary laws, had repudiated the authority of the Oral Law, minimized the place of Hebrew in education as well as in the ritual and had eliminated all references to Zion from its worship. These men felt the need of making haste slowly. They wanted to conserve the vital, essential, institutions and attitudes of Jewish life, even though they admitted that modern life would necessitate certain revisions in Jewish practice.

The term conservative is not enjoying great repute in our country. To be conservative means to be reactionary, to be a slave to the past and to stand in the way of progress. Small wonder then that Dr. Kaplan's followers call their movement "Reconstructionism." They wish to stress the need of a deliberate, conscious redirection and reorganization of Jewish life to meet present day needs. I doubt, however, whether they will succeed in supplanting the unofficial connotation "Conservative Judaism" since popular vocabulary is not easily changed.

At any rate, Conservative Judaism is the designation generally given to an ever-growing movement in American Judaism. While many will conveniently agree on the name, there is little

agreement on the exact meaning of that term. The most frequent heard criticism of our movement in Reform as well as in Orthodox circles is that we do not know exactly where we stand on the various questions of Jewish theology and Jewish observance. We speak of loyalty to tradition and yet we permit departures from tradition in our synagogue ritual. We speak of the sanctity of the Torah and the Mitzvoth and yet we permit free discussion of such vital issues as Torah Min Hashamayim (Revelation) and the need for the further development of our Jewish law. Our critics claim to be befuddled by our own indecision. They claim that we are "nicht milchig" and "nicht fleischig."

To my mind, our reluctance to freeze our movement into a definite, inflexible mold, is evidence of our strength and of our progressive outlook. Judaism is now going through a period of transition. We have just recently emerged from the confinement of the ghetto where Judaism became ingrown. We are facing a world in turmoil. Our age is beset with perplexities in religious thinking as well as in the economic sphere. We have barely had an opportunity to view the new scene and to consider the issues at hand. Surely this is no time for rigid authoritarianism. We want to preserve the continuity, the catholicity of our Judaism in the face of necessary revaluation. We cannot, however, afford to impose the straightjacket of rigid dogma upon a generation which is undergoing a transvaluation of values. We must leave room within the synagogue for those who are honestly perplexed as well as for the unquestioning believer. We must permit wide latitude of difference of opinion in religious attitude and orientation if we are to take into account the fact that the age of blind obedience in matters of religion or moral is gone. At the same time we are anxious to *conserve* those tangible, visible, and time-honored elements of Jewish life which make for continuity with our past and which have intrinsic value and content.

Conservative Judaism constitutes a fresh attempt to achieve the much needed readjustment of Judaism to modern times. It is at once with Reform in its belief that Judaism cannot

afford to ignore the results of critical research. It reckons, however, with the fact if Judaism is not a direct infallible revelation from heaven, it is the natural outgrowth of the life and aspirations of the Jewish people. It asserts that the group consciousness and the collective life of the Jewish people must be cultivated and intensified in order to assure further creativity and growth. Thus we start out with the premise that Judaism constitutes the particular religious orientation of a living people possessing a common historic awareness, a common language, a highly developed set of religious folkways, and national aspirations centered about a historic homeland. We assert with Dr. Kaplan that Judaism is a religious civilization.

When we say that Judaism is a religious civilization we assert that our group self-consciousness and our historic aspirations centered about God. We made the quest for God our national vocation. Israel loved in terms of the conviction that it is a "Kingdom of priests and a holy nation. The prophets referred to Israel as "the servant of the Lord." The rabbis searched the Torah and interpreted it in devious ways in order to make God real to man. Most of our literature is theocentric and deeply religious and mystical in nature. Our mitzvoth and observances aim to sanctify life and to deepen man's awareness of God. "Know Him in all Thy ways," is the motto of our Jewish life and observances.

We do not attempt to prove the existence and reality of God. The Jew did not just believe in God as a result of philosophical speculation, he knew Him by intuition and experienced His reality through the promptings of his soul. All attempts by mediaeval Jewish philosophers to prove the existence of God were motivated by the influence of Greek and Arabic culture. The Jewish religion asserts the existence of God and leaves it to the individual to experience him in terms of his temperament and his personality. There is one God but there must necessarily be more than one conception of Him. As Jews we are at one in the methods in which we feel the nearness of God. We can feel His presence when we sanctify the mundane acts of life

through the observance of the Mitzvoth. By means of the Mezuzah we symbolically dedicate our home-life to God. By observance of Kashruth we can sanctify the food which we eat. By the observance of the Sabbath and holidays we stress ideals of leisure, freedom, gratitude, and moral growth as means of approximating the Divine in human life. Thus our Mitzvoth are more than folkways. They are time-honored means of cultivating the God consciousness born out of our forefathers' quest for God. They are holy because whatever their origin, they were dedicated to the worship of God and so long as we dedicate their observance to Him they have validity for us. The Torah is sacred because it registers those experiences in which Israel grew to a higher realization of God's moral challenge to man. The Halachah is valid and binding because it is the outgrowth of the collective life of our people in its relation to God.

To recapitulate, Conservative Judaism begins by declaring that the Jews constitute a living people. In the course of its career, this people has produced a distinct civilization. That civilization has all the elements that make for group solidarity and group uniqueness. It has a language, a literature, a rich array of distinctive holidays and customs which grew out of our collective historic experience. Our civilization is unique in that it is religious in content and character. It is the result of a persistent quest of a people for the approximation of the Divine in human life. Our sacred literature i.e. our Torah, is the record of the origin and growth of that quest. Hence it has for us supreme and sacred significance. The Torah is like a spiritual ladder recording the progressive steps whereby Israel climbed upward in its perception of the Divine. The study of Torah to modern Jews should include the duty of differentiating between the lower and higher stages in Israel's aspirations toward God. The conviction that the process of Torah growth is neverceasing, should lead us to stress those elements of the collective life which deepen the group consciousness and the God consciousness of our people in order to assure further enrichment of our heritage. Thus we find that the Hebrew language, the rebuilding of Palestine, and the observance of the Mitzvoth are indispensable for the continued growth of our culture.

It seems rather strange and mediocval to speak of a people dedicating its life and its collective genius to the development of a God-consciousness. The modern trend seems to be away from God to humanism and secularism.

Some are ready to grant that Judaism is a civilization but they feel that like all modern civilizations Judaism should be redirected along secular trends. Thus we have our secular Zionists and Territorialist culturists. Others would like to stress Jewish ethical ideals without courting the embarrassment of the dogmatic assertion of the centrality of God. They tell us that since all other nations have stripped their collective life of the theological color, Israel should do likewise. Herein we Conservative Jews vigorously assert that our nationhood is and should be unique in that we refuse to relegate God to a corner of life. We seek Him and we serve Him, in every relationship of life. We find Him when we practice justice in our relationship to our fellow men. We find Him when we condemn economic injustice. We seek to enthrone Him when we work for a better social order. We adore Him when we oppose war and promote world peace. We reverence Him when we hold sacred human life and human personality. We are constantly brought into His Divine Presence when we sincerely commune with Him through the time-honored mitzvoth of our religion. We do not read out of Judaism those who do not see eye to eye with us. We feel that reform Jews, orthodox Jews, secularists are our brethren and to the extent to which their life is lived on an ethical and idealistic plane, we have profound respect for them and we cooperate with them in all matters that promote the welfare and the well-being of the Jewish people. But we cannot afford to water down the meaning of Judaism so as to avoid implying critical judgment on the many diverse and diluted types of Jewish loyalty. To do that would be to stress the lowest common denominator of our aggregate self.

In this attitude toward the Halachah, Conservative Judaism seeks to stress those religious institutions and observances which have present-day meaning and which can be correlated with the challenging spiritual problems of our day. Thus we stress the Sabbath, the Holydays and the home observances because they can have vital significance for us. We stress the dietary laws,

urging their full observance in the home and their modified observance by abstaining from Trefa meat outside of the home, because we are convinced that the observance of these laws not only makes the home Jewish but can also intensify the God awareness of those who observe them by investing even the mundane act of eating with a feeling of sacredness. We believe that certain rigors of the law can be abated by an intelligent and understanding reinterpretation based on accepted principles of the Halachah. Thus we are considering a great project for avoiding the distress of the future Agunah by finding some legal means of redeeming Jewish womanhood from the rigors due to the arrested development of the Jewish divorce laws.

We realize that some observances have become obsolete and cannot possibly be re-vitalized or re-interpreted while others are actually in the way of the continued growth of Judaism. In the case of the former, we have not abrogated any obsolete practices. We just refrain from stressing them. Conservative Jews do not stress the shaatnez or the shaving prohibition any more than do most orthodox rabbis. We see no reason for the abolition or abrogation of that which is obsolescent but harmless since we can easily conceive of many pious souls finding even in the obsolete observances additional ways of dedicating their daily life to God. In the case of some traditions, Conservative Jews have chosen to disregard the Halachah where they felt that "it is better to uproot one letter of the Torah in order to save the entire Torah." Thus many, though not all conservative congregations have introduced family pews because they feel that Judaism is doomed if it does not reckon with the changed status of womanhood in modern times.

Conservative Judaism is not averse to the development of new and meaningful ritual to enrich our Jewish life. We need a meaningful consecration ritual for children who begin their Jewish education. We are sorely in need of an impressive ritual to mark the initiation of adolescent girls into Jewish life. We have not yet developed a fully satisfactory service for the "late Friday evening" assemblies. There is room for the enrichment of our prayerbook with supplementary devotions which would not at the same time disturb the essential universal conformity and character of Jewish

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JEWISH EVENTS REVIEWED

By LESTER LYONS

A PAMPHLET which makes interesting although unpleasant reading is that entitled "Jews, Jobs and Discrimination," recently published by the American Jewish Congress. This pamphlet summarizes in part the results of a six-year investigation, under the direction of Rabbi J. X. Cohen, Chairman of the Committee on Economic Problems of the American Jewish Congress, of the difficulties Jews have in obtaining employment in the Metropolitan area. The study shows that large utility companies, including the New York Telephone Co., the Consolidated Gas Co., the American Telephone & Telegraph Co. and the Western Electric Co., and large banks, including the Chase National Bank, the National City Bank, and the Guaranty Trust Co., as well as other financial institutions and employers of "white collar labor," have an inappreciably few number of Jewish employees and discriminate against Jewish applicants for jobs. It is also shown that even in the professions much discrimination against the Jew exists. In its main aspect the report reveals no spectacular information on the subject. It is important, however, in that, buttressed by facts and figures, it confirms the general belief that Jews are systematically discriminated against by employers who derive much of their income from the Jewish public.

Rabbi Cohen sets forth the program of his Committee, which is intended to meet the problem of discrimination. This program includes investigation and adjustment of complaints, job placement through established agencies, cooperation with Christian leaders and agencies, education of employers through conferences, legislative work for remedial measures, and research to ascertain the economic contribution of the Jewish community. As a practical step toward working out this program the Committee has already opened in this city, at Congress headquarters, a special bureau to receive and investigate complaints dealing with discrimination against Jews seeking employment.

* * *

Influential and strong though it was, the B'nai B'rith in Germany finally went the way of all Jewry in that country, falling beneath the weight of Nazi persecution. The German govern-

ment has suppressed the activities of the B'nai B'rith lodges and confiscated their property. Passports of all officials of that organization have been cancelled in order to prevent them from leaving the country. The reasons for such action on the part of the government have not yet been disclosed. In a way, the suppression was rather unexpected, since the organization was concerned with social, cultural and philanthropic matters and engaged in no political activity. Indeed, its leaders in this country had not been disposed toward having its members here participating in the anti-Nazi boycott. On the other hand, it might have been foreseen that within the course of time the Nazi terror would not discriminate between classes of Jews and would, as opportunity warranted, attempt to despoil and crush all of them. This incident may perhaps bring home acutely to those Jews who have taken a cautious attitude with regard to retaliation against Nazi Germany the fact that they may expect no favors at the hands of the German government and that they need more than silk gloves to protect and further the interests of Jewry.

* * *

An observation on anti-Semitism which may well be pondered over is that made by Mr. Herbert Agar in the Louisville "Courier Journal." Mr. Agar says:

"My chief point against anti-Semitism is not that it is hard on the Jews. For all I know the Jews may be well able to take care of themselves.

"But I hate this movement because it is hard on America. It betrays our country; it makes our national ideals a joke. And in addition to that, it has a degenerating effect on our minds."

Urging that the fight against anti-Semitism be brought out into the open and that Jew-baiters like Edmondson be subjected to attack the writer continues:

"I would like Mr. Edmondson and his allies to be attacked by their gentile fellow-Americans, on the ground that we Americans have a pride in our ideals and that Jew-baiters are the enemies of Americanism."

* * *

By a coincidence which borders on grotesque humor Germany has set

June 30th, the third anniversary of its notorious blood purge, as the date for the celebration of the 200th anniversary of the founding of the University of Goettingen. Invitations to attend this celebration have been sent to institutions of higher learning throughout the world. The response has certainly not been flattering to the Nazi government. Practically all the universities in England and Holland, and many similar institutions in this country, have declined to be represented at the celebration. The general ground for the refusals to participate is that academic freedom and scientific truth have been destroyed in Germany. Numerous noted scholars and teachers who would not degrade their standards of truth and culture to conform with the policies of the government have been dismissed and many have been forced into exile. From the University of Goettingen itself 50 professors have been dismissed since the Nazis took over the government. The number of students in German universities has declined by 40 per cent because of the enforced lack of facilities for instruction and difficulties in the way of those seeking admission to such institutions for the purpose of genuine learning.

* * *

The Youth Division of the American Jewish Congress, which has been endeavoring to arouse the Jewish youth in this country to a proper appreciation of their responsibilities as Jews and to the opportunities they have to advance and safeguard Jewish interests, will hold its annual convention on June 6th in the building of the American Women's Association in this city. At the convention, which is expected to be attended by about 500 delegates of organizations affiliated with the Youth Division, seminars and conferences will be held dealing with problems of concern to Jewish youth. The subjects for discussion will include topics like anti-Semitism, social and economic discrimination against the Jews, and education of Jewish youth. In conjunction with the convention the Youth Division is issuing a souvenir journal and sponsoring a dance at the same place the evening of June 5. George Brussels is chairman of the

committee arranging the convention and Lester Lyons is chairman of the committee in charge of the dance.

* * *

Rumors have been circulating to the effect that the Royal Commission, which several months ago investigated the disorders in Palestine and the causes of friction between Jews and Arabs there, may recommend the territorial division of that land between the two peoples. This rumored plan may have been put forward merely as a trial balloon. It has already succeeded in arousing the active opposition of both Jew and Arab. The Arab press, as well as prominent Jews and Jewish organizations in Palestine condemn this proposal as an impracticable solution for various reasons. Moreover, Article 22 of the Covenant of the League of Nations would forbid such partition.

* * *

The Lithuanian government has prohibited representatives of Zionist organizations from engaging in Zionist activities in that country. This is the outgrowth of serious disorders which followed the breaking up of a meeting at which Lieb Jaffe, the director of the Keirei Hayesod was to have spoken. Antonas Smetonas, president of Lithu-

ania, however, in a statement given to Mr. Jaffe, said: "For over 500 years, since Vytautas the Great invited the Jews to settle in Lithuanian towns, the Lithuanian Jewish people have lived and worked in harmony on Lithuanian soil. Therefore the Lithuanian people have followed the endeavors of the Jewish people to establish a National Home in Palestine with great interest and sincere admiration for the immense constructive work accomplished. May I convey to the Jews of the world my deep sympathy with their aspirations to refound a National Homeland for Israel, and my own and the Lithuanian nation's heartfelt wishes that the Jewish people may have every success in their great undertaking."

* * *

At a meeting held in New York under the auspices of the Women's Division of the American Jewish Congress, at which were present delegates from 350 women's organizations of the metropolitan area, a resolution was adopted urging American universities to refuse to participate in the Goettingen celebration. In another resolution the group called for the submission to the President of the United States of a petition that he use his good offices "on behalf of the minority religious

and racial groups in Poland" so as to assure "a large measure of justice for the three million Jews in Poland." The organizations participating at this meeting represented Protestants and Catholics as well as Jews. Mrs. Stephen S. Wise presided.

* * *

Two contrasting reports indicate what concern the Jews should have over the situation in Spain. It is reported that Lieutenant Klaus Selzner, right-hand man of Dr. Ley, leader of the Nazi Labor Front, has arrived in Burgos from Germany to assist the insurgents. His purpose is to help General Franco organize his activities "on National Socialist lines," and to take charge of a great anti-Semitic campaign after victory of the rebels. On the other hand, Senor Oleiver, Spanish minister of Justice, has promised that after the civil war is over immigrants, including Jews, will be gladly received in Spain, preference being given to the Sephardic Jews.

* * *

The implications of life in a totalitarian state may be judged from a recent incident in Italy. When Dr. Ley visited Turin a reception in his honor was held by the Italian Fascists. Present at the function were Jewish Fascists since, in the Fascist party, there is no distinction between Jews and others. And one of the speeches in Dr. Ley's honor was delivered by a Jewish leader.

* * *

A new Fascist party, the National Socialist League, has been established in England. Its leaders are John Beckett and William Joyce, who were expelled from the British Union of Fascists, the organization headed by Sir Oswald Mosley. While they disagree with the "form of organization" of the Union and with Mosley's methods as being "bureaucratic and un-British," they have substantially the same objectives. "Our attitude," Mr. Joyce is reported as having said, "is definitely anti-Jewish." He adds: "We regard Communism as the medium whereby the Jewish financier seduces the proletariat from the national ideals and prepares it for an international state of which the Communist demagogues are to be the leaders but the Jewish financiers the veritable rulers." He promises not to engage in "illegal methods such as the beating up of Jews," and will leave the question of anti-Semitism for the British people to decide.

FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

A BOOK has recently appeared which should be of interest to our younger readers. It is called "From Moses to Einstein—They All Are Jews," and was written by Mac Davis and published in New York by the Jordan Publishing Company. It is a beautifully printed volume, with excellent illustrations and portraits by E. E. Claridge, giving one-page biographies of great men who have appeared in Jewish life, starting with Moses and continuing to Albert Einstein.

The short biographies are written in simple language and in excellent style, giving the most significant facts of the lives of these great men. The only criticism that might be offered is in the choice of the subjects. Some may doubt the wisdom of a few of the men who were included. Others will feel that many another name of a great son in Israel should have found a place in such a book. Nevertheless, despite this shortcoming, the work is heartily recommended to parents as a gift to their boys and girls.

Parents are often confronted with the problem of securing interesting games for the entertainment of their children which should at the same time have an educational value. Such a game has recently appeared, called "The Game of Oasis—The Romance of the Promised Land" and brought out by Milton Bradley Company of Springfield, Massachusetts.

It is a game similar to that of "Monopoly," which is so popular in many homes today. The theme, however, is Palestine, and in playing the game the child becomes acquainted in a most natural way not only with the whole significance of Palestine, but with some of the most important institutions that help to build the land, and with some of the great economic enterprises.

We heartily endorse this game. It might be added that grown-ups who enjoy "Monopoly" will find an even greater interest in "The Game of Oasis."

—I. H. L.

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THE SUN AND I

By BARRIE and LEONA STAVIS

JOSEPH, of Canaan, was no favorite with his many brothers. They didn't like his finely moulded features or his fastidiousness, which contrasted so strangely with their own uncouthness, and they certainly had no use for his high-flown talk and his vast imagination. He was always telling them how important he would one day be and even said that the time would come when they would kneel before him.

This was the last straw. They got him when they were alone on the plains of Dothan. Kicks and blows descended on Joseph plentifully. Then he was thrown into a pit with a few vipers for company. Overhead the red-bearded faces of his brothers leered at him.

"Think yourself out of there!" they taunted.

Probably Joseph would have perished in the pit had not a slave-dealer come along and the leader of the brethren was struck with the idea of selling Joseph. The dealer was more than willing to buy. A price of twenty pieces of gold was set and Joseph was hauled out of the pit. Luckily, he was whole. The dealer drove him off, and the brothers shared the gold. Joseph had been useful to them at last.

But how useful they had been to Joseph they didn't realize.

The slave-dealer sold the young Hebrew to the Egyptians. His overlord was none other than Potiphar, the Governor of Egypt, but his immediate master was the slave-driver, who, like Joseph's brothers, soon discovered that Joseph could be a terrible nuisance. He insisted on making suggestions, particularly how to sow corn and rear cattle, and the slave-driver and the overseer at last grew infinitely weary of him and threw him into the dungeon reserved for incorrigible or lazy slaves.

The dungeon was below the surface of the earth, which meant far below the level of the Nile, and was consistently damp. The dampness was relied upon to make the slave-prisoners cough their lungs out. That was considered a cheaper way of getting rid of them than feeding them for a length of time in the hope that they would reform. If they didn't succumb quickly

("The Sun and I" has been playing at the Adelphi Theatre for several months and is one of the most successful productions of the Federal Theatre. The authors have given their own interpretation of the Biblical story of Joseph. The interpretation is a unique one, but has the quality of timeliness. The following narrative is a condensed fictionization of the play prepared by Joseph Kaye.—Editor)

enough the physician was called in to cure the cough. That was done by a thrust of a dagger into the ribs.

Joseph, lying on the cold stone slab in the dungeon, was awaiting a visit by the doctor, for he happened to prove the hardy kind. At the same time Vashnee, Potiphar's wife, being bored with her day, went on tour of inspection with Arraffi, her husband's chamberlain, and saw Joseph. She talked to him and was attracted as much by what he said as by his good looks. Despite his miserable position Joseph was still haughty and still complained that the overseers didn't know their jobs. "I showed them how they could treble their crops, and their flocks, but the fools would not listen to me," he told Vashnee. "They might at least have tried my way."

Arraffi too was attracted by Joseph. Arraffi was the real governor of Egypt, for Potiphar was a self-indulgent, thick-headed individual. Arraffi was also a patriot, a natural one, which meant that he was troubled about the future of Egypt. He knew that Pharaoh relied exclusively upon others to do his work, and Potiphar was chief of those delegates. Now, as long as Arraffi lived Potiphar's work was well and shrewdly done, and Pharaoh and Egypt was satisfied. But Arraffi was an old man, and weary. Should he die, what would happen?

"Egypt," Arraffi heard Joseph say, "is like a fat cow, lying in the grass, ready for the slaughter by her enemies. She is doing nothing to protect herself."

So, between Vashnee and Arraffi Joseph was saved. He came under the protection of the chamberlain, and in a remarkably short time he was the chief power under Potiphar. His in-

genuity was startling to those familiar with his activities. His conduct of Potiphar's affairs made Potiphar one of the most envied of Pharaoh's executives.

Arraffi was proud of Joseph. He gladly turned over his management to him and was happy to retire to the desert for a life of contemplation, coming in to visit Joseph only occasionally. And on each visit he counseled wisdom. It seemed he did not think that Joseph, despite his cleverness, was yet fully provided with that commodity.

Naturally, Joseph had enemies. But he had the capacity for using them to increase his own power. There was Malfi, for example, his first assistant. Malfi had a beautiful wife who died suddenly, causing him great grief. While Malfi was mourning his loss, and in the presence of the lounging Potiphar, Joseph remarked that the day before the woman had died she had offered him, Joseph, a dish of spiced figs. The figs smelled deliciously but they seemed spiced a new way. Malfi's wife ate of them, added Joseph, but he didn't.

Malfi turned pale as he heard this and involuntarily sprang towards Joseph. "She ate them?" he cried.

"Yes, of course," replied Joseph, with just the trace of a smile. "I insisted that she eat them."

Potiphar rose from his couch in amazement. He was too schooled in the ways of poisoning not to recognize at once that Malfi had tried to kill Joseph. Malfi too realized that he had given himself away and fell on his knees to plead for mercy.

Potiphar was set on executing Malfi there and then. But Joseph stopped him.

"But I don't understand," cried Potiphar. "He tried to kill you. He will try to kill you again. Why do you spare him?"

"He is useful," replied Joseph. "And if you make me more valuable to him alive than dead he will be even more useful."

Potiphar did not understand. Nor did Malfi.

"Issue an order," said Joseph, "that should I die, from whatever cause, Malfi on that day dies too."

Potiphar broke into a roar of laughter. That was indeed clever.

"But Joseph," wailed Malfi, "something may happen to you over which we have no control. You may fall in the river accidentally. A sacred crocodile may swallow you. That will be the doing of the gods!"

"Then pray to the gods for me every day."

Anxiously Malfi begged him: "You will take care of yourself, won't you, Joseph?"

"No," replied Joseph coolly. "That's your job now!"

Joseph's phenomenal progress in the house of Potiphar would have continued had it not been for Vashnee, who was an unscrupulous lady, much smitten with Joseph. For that matter he liked her too. She was very enticing. But he was loyal to his master and to his work. He did not see how he could possess Potiphar's wife and go about his plans as impersonally as before. Inevitably his judgment would be warped. So he refused to be Vashnee's lover and she became infuriated. Suddenly she tore her gown from her body and shrieked that Joseph had attacked her.

That ended Joseph's career as Potiphar's counsellor and he was reduced to the ranks of a common slave.

It was two years later that Pharaoh had a dream and was unable to find anyone to interpret it for him. He had already executed several prophets whose prophecies he recognized as drivel and flattery when his winebearer discovered Joseph and risked his neck to introduce him to Pharaoh.

To Pharaoh's intense astonishment Joseph analyzed the dream intelligently. The ruler was also struck with Joseph's independent manner, and his bitter pride. He asked him who he was.

"For two years," said Joseph, "I was ruler of Egypt."

"I have been around a good deal," remarked Pharaoh, "but I don't recall remembering your reign. In what period of Egypt's history did you rule?"

"My rule," replied Joseph, "ended in the year of the great rape."

Then Pharaoh remembered the tale that had gone through the court concerning Potiphar's slave and Vashnee. Pharaoh had been much amused by

it. But now that he saw who the slave was, and now that Joseph took care to tell him all he had done in the service of the governor, Pharaoh called in Potiphar and demanded to know why he had let a mere personal matter interfere with the efficiency of his government.

"But I had to preserve the sanctity of the home," Potiphar defended himself. "What would people have said?"

"Nothing comparable to what they would say if they knew how stupid you were," observed Pharaoh. Then he did something sensational.

Calling Joseph to his throne he made him kneel.

"I anoint you of royal blood," he said, touching him with his sceptre. "I give you Princess Asenath, daughter of Potiphar, as wife. And—I appoint you Governor of Egypt."

Joseph stared at him, his face aflame.

"What I want of you," said Pharaoh, "is action. Avoid the damnable habit of stringing words together endlessly. I learned that from the politicians, and I can talk enough for both of us."

From then on Joseph really grew powerful. Pharaoh left everything in his hands. He even saw the day when his brothers came to Egypt to buy wheat and knelt before him, not knowing who he was. He saw himself elevated to the position of the greatest man in the country under Pharaoh.

But then he ran afoul of the priests.

Joseph had created a system of super-efficiency in the land. Now he decided to dam the Nile so that the country would have a constant supply of water for irrigation instead of suffering periodic droughts.

This the priests would not allow. The Nile was sacred, and its movements were subject to the will of the gods. No mortal could interfere.

Joseph scorned this argument. He knew the priests were merely attempting to guard their own powers. He appealed to Pharaoh, and although the ruler said he was entirely in sympathy with Joseph he had made it a rule never to interfere with the priests. He wished Joseph well, but he warned him that if he chose battle he, Pharaoh, would stand on the sidelines, and when the end came he would be on the side of the victor, sharing the laurels.

Against this cold-blooded policy Joseph had no defense. He gave up his plans for the dams. Instead he be-

gan to hoard wheat. He anticipated a drought and consequent famine, and when the people had no bread to eat he would give them bread, and thus prove that his planning was better than the words of the priests.

To achieve his purpose he instituted the greatest speed-up system that the country had known. He created the shift, one mass of men joining the outgoing mass without cessation of work. He made the men sing while they were working so that they would be forced to use work-motions and accomplish more.

He drove the men to such lengths in his anxiety to increase the collections of grain that at last one group rebelled, and when Pharaoh saw that he knew it was time to call a halt. If one group rebelled another would, and soon the country would be in revolt.

He stopped the frenzied activity, acceded to the demands of the people for Joseph's death, and so restored peace.

But to Joseph he said that even though he had promised the Jewish governor's death he did not say when he would die, and told Joseph to lose himself in the desert.

Joseph accepted the decision without complaint and with only one regret: "I tried to give them a perfected state," he said to Pharaoh, "but I should have worked through the people instead of through you."

Then went into the desert, his fame over.

YARZEITLICHT

By ABRAHAM ASEN

MIT a klorn heln feier
Brent mein Muter's yohrzeitlicht
Ich seh mein Muter's kloze oign,
Ich seh ihr teier lieb gesicht.

Schmeltzt dos feier ois dem cheilev,
Faln tropens fon dem licht,
Faln, ducht sich, heise trern
Fon mein Muter's blas gesicht.

(English Translation by
Dr. D. Rolnick)

*With a clear and lucid fire
Burns my mother's Yahrzeit light;
Lo! my mother's face I vision
And her eyes so mild and bright.*

*There the fire melts the tallows,
And the drops with downward pace
Seem like teardrops hot descending
From my mother's pallid face.*

BROOKLYN JEWISH CENTER ACTIVITIES

CONSECRATION SERVICE TO TAKE PLACE THIS SUNDAY MORNING, SHEVUOTH IN SYNAGOGUE

The second Consecration service to be held in our Center will be conducted this Sunday morning, May 16, the first day Shevuoth in connection with our services.

Following the example of last year, we shall have the entire religious service first, without the sermon, which will terminate promptly at 11 o'clock. Precisely at eleven the members of the Consecration Class, under the leadership of Mr. Joseph M. Schwartz, President of the Center, and Mr. Frank Schaeffer, Chairman of the Hebrew School Committee, will start the procession to the pulpit.

The following program will be given:

Opening Prayer—Zelta Daniels

Hymn—Consecration Class

First Blessing for the Torah—Doris Levy

Second Blessing for the Torah—Florance Goldfarb

The Contribution of Jewish Womanhood to Jewish Life

(a) To Religion—Blossom Halpern

(b) To the Torah—Evelyn Ostow

(c) To the Jewish Home—Marion Gitelson

(d) To the Synagogue—Muriel Rottenberg

(e) To Palestine—Pearl Goldstein

(f) To Jewish Character and Ideals—Eleanor Stone

(f) The Challenge to Jewish Womanhood Today—The Pledge of Consecration—Phoebe Honig

Hymn—Consecration Class

"A Prayer"—Poem by Philip M. Raskin—Dorothy Shapiro

Conferring of Certificates and Blessing by Rabbi Levinthal

Valedictory—Gladys Hammer

Closing Prayer—Edith Kaufmann

The program promises to be a most interesting one, and we are confident that the members who will attend will derive a great deal of pleasure from the service.

The class has taken an intensive course during the past year, under the leadership of Mrs. Helen Levinthal Sukloff, in Jewish history, Jewish religion and current Jewish events.

A "NEW DEAL" FOR THE YOUNG FOLKS LEAGUE

"The New Deal Slate" which was unanimously elected at the meeting on April 22nd, proposes to rejuvenate the Young Folks League by the transfusion of new members into its ranks. With all the facilities of the Center, one of the finest institutions in the country placed at their disposal, the Executive Committee is planning a brilliant social program for the balance of this season and for next year.

In order to introduce their new policies to the young folks of the Center, an Introduction Party is being held at the home of Nathan Rothstein, 1388 President St., on Sunday evening, May 23rd. This intimate gathering is intended to afford the young folks an opportunity to become better acquainted with one another in a friendly, informal atmosphere. All the young folks of the Center are welcome. Admission will be by membership card only.

On Sunday evening, June 13th, the League will hold its annual Spring Sports Hop on the Roof Grade. Moonlight dancing to the music of a popular dance orchestra.

In addition to the regular monthly meetings which are followed by dancing and refreshments, the Committee is planning a series of semi-monthly social meetings for the entertainment and enjoyment of the League's members.

The newly elected officers of the League are: President, William Rosenberg; Vice-Presidents, Al Baron and Sylvia Boskowitz; Secretary, Rose Gross; Treasurer, Lou Seldin; Chairman of Executive Board, Nathan Rothstein. Both the officers and the Committee have extended a plea for the support and co-operation worthy of the institution it represents and be assured of a splendid season's entertainment.

COURSE LECTURES

Psychology—Wednesday evenings at 8:30 P. M. — Miss Florence Rosen, Instructor.

Modern Drama and Literature — Wednesday evenings at 8:30 P. M. — Mr. J. M. Kaplan, M.A., Instructor.

SHEVUOTH SERVICES

Shevuoth services will be held in our Synagogue on Saturday and Sunday evenings at 8 o'clock and on Sunday and Monday mornings at 8:30. On the first day, Sunday, the services will conclude promptly at 11 o'clock, when the Consecration services will begin.

On the second day of Shevuoth, Monday, the Yiskor or memorial service for the dead will be said at 10:30. Rabbi Levinthal will preach on the significance of the festival immediately after the memorial service. Rev. Kantor will officiate on both days.

HEBREW SCHOOL GRADUATION TO BE HELD ON THURSDAY EVENING, MAY 27th

The Center members are asked to reserve Thursday evening, May 27th for the graduation exercises of our afternoon Hebrew School, which will be held on that evening. The Rev. Dr. Max Drob, former president of the Rabbinical Assembly of America, and one of the prominent Rabbis of this city will be the principal speaker.

A fine musical program is arranged. An interesting program will also be given by the members of the graduation class. We hope that all those who are interested in Jewish education will be with us that evening.

CENTER MEMBERSHIP SOCIAL MEETING AND BRIDGE

The next social meeting of the entire membership of the Center has been arranged for Wednesday evening, May 19th at 8:30 o'clock.

The evening will open with a brief business meeting, in the course of which several important matters will be discussed.

At the conclusion of the meeting there will be a bridge party, followed by refreshments. All members of the Center, men and women, are hereby extended a cordial invitation to be present.

BAR MITZVAH

We extend our hearty congratulations to Mr. and Mrs. Abraham Gross of 605 Montgomery Street, upon the Bar Mitzvah of their son, Howard, which will be celebrated at the Center on Saturday, May 15th.

HEBREW AND PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOLS

The attention of the pupils in 8B classes in elementary school, Junior and Senior High School is called to the fact that Hebrew may be selected as one of the foreign language studies in Junior and Senior High Schools. Those desiring to take up the Hebrew language should communicate this fact to the principal of their local high school.

Hebrew is taught in the following High Schools in Brooklyn: Abraham Lincoln High School, Thomas Jefferson High School, and Samuel J. Tilden High School. Should you find any difficulties, please communicate with the Jewish Education Association at 70 Fifth Avenue, New York.

THE MACCABEE CLUB

During the past month the Maccabee club listened to an address by a guest speaker on photography. The Basketball team coached by Zeldin closed a very successful season. The club now has a baseball team.

CLUB CALENDAR

Maccabees—Meetings held on Saturday evening at 8 o'clock.

Vivalets — Meet every Saturday night at 8 o'clock.

Center Club—Meetings held Saturday nights at 8 o'clock.

Girl Scouts—Meetings held every Wednesday evening at 7 o'clock.

Boy Scouts—Meetings held every Monday evening at 7 o'clock.

THE VIVALET CLUB

The Vivalet Club, daughters of Center members, have been very active in the last few weeks. True to their tradition, every month they have made several substantial contributions to some worthy cause.

Talks on various topics were delivered by several members of the club, followed by lively discussions. Miss Roma Cantor spoke on "Assimilation Among Jews", and Miss Phoebe Honig delivered an interesting talk on "Dr. Theodore Herzl". An elaborate social evening is being planned by the Vivalets for the close of the season.

P. T. A. HEBREW and SUNDAY SCHOOLS MEET MAY 27th

An important meeting of the Parent Teachers Association of the Hebrew and Sunday Schools of the Center will be held on Thursday evening, May 27th at 8:00 o'clock sharp.

This meeting will begin promptly as per schedule and close not later than 9 o'clock, in order that the parents may attend in a body the Hebrew School graduation Exercise which will be held on the same evening.

RESTAURANT

The Center restaurant is closed for the season after May 9th.

SABBATH SERVICES

Kindling of Candles at 7:49 P. M.
Friday Evening Services at 6 P. M.

Sabbath Morning Services. Sedrah Bamidbar will commence at 8:45 o'clock.

Mincha Services at 6 P. M.

Class in Ein Yaakob, under the leadership of Mr. Benj. Hirsh at 5 P. M.

DAILY SERVICES

Morning Services at 7 and 8 o'clock.
Mincha Services at 8 P. M.

GYMNASIUM AND BATH SCHEDULE

The gymnasium and bath department is open as per the following schedule:

Monday—Men 3 P. M. to 11 P. M.

Boys 3 P. M. to 5 P. M.

Women 10 A. M. to 3 P. M.

Girls—

Tuesday—Women 10 A. M. - 10 P. M.

Girls 3 P. M. to 5 P. M.

Wednesday—Men 3 P. M. to 11 P. M.

Boys 3 P. M. to 5 P. M.

Women 10 A. M. to 3 P. M.

Girls—

Thursday—Men 5 P. M. to 11 P. M.

Boys—

Women 10 A. M. to 5 P. M.

Girls 3 P. M. to 5 P. M.

Friday—Men 2 P. M. to 6 P. M.

Boys 2 P. M. to 6 P. M.

Saturday—Men 8 P. M. to 11 P. M.

Sundays and Legal Holidays—

Men 10 A. M. to 2 P. M.

Boys 2 P. M. to 4 P. M.

Beginning June 1st the summer schedule will go into effect. The department will be closed on Saturday evening during the months of June, July and August, and will be open on Sundays to 6 P. M. instead of 4 P. M.

SHEVUOTH SCHEDULE GYMNASIUM AND BATH

Due to the Shevuoth holiday, the gymnasium and bath department will close this Friday, May 14th at six o'clock and will reopen as per the usual schedule on Tuesday morning, May 18th at 10 o'clock.

CONGRATULATIONS

We extend our hearty congratulations and best wishes to the following:

Mr. and Mrs. Sol Goodman of 596 Montgomery Street, upon the birth of a boy to their children, Mr. and Mrs. William Fisher on May 4th.

Mr. Murray Willen of 712 Crown Street, upon his engagement to Miss Ruth Wasserberger of Forest Hills, Long Island.

Mr. Myron Grabisch of 1497 Carroll Street, upon his engagement to Miss Florence Ertischek of 1928 E. 24th Street, Brooklyn.

PERSONALS

Mrs. Joseph Horowitz, honorary president of the Sisterhood of the Center, was elected president of the Brooklyn Chapter of the Hadassah.

STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL and DANCE

Arranged under the joint auspices
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CENTER SISTERHOOD

and the

PARENT TEACHERS ASSOCIATION
HEBREW and SUNDAY SCHOOLS



Wednesday evening, June 16th

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Sunday Evening, June 13, 1937

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Zeitz, Harry
Married Specialty Store
Res. 135 Eastern Parkway
Bus. 501 Fulton St.
Proposed by Mr. Parnes

The following have applied for reinstatement in the Brooklyn Jewish Center:

Kopple, Louis
Married Real Estate
Res. 985 Park Place
Proposed by Hyman Aaron

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APPLICATIONS for MEMBERSHIP

The following have applied for membership in the Brooklyn Jewish Center:

Defren, Frank F.
Unmarried Accountant
Res. 1635 Park Place
Bus. 233 Broadway
Proposed by Morris Hammerman & Ben Osher

Kurtz, Jerald
Unmarried Salesman
Res. 1378 President St.
Bus. 162-24 Jamaica
Proposed by Jacob Rutstein and Henry Gold

Londner, Rudolph L.
Unmarried Attorney
Res. 655 St. Mark's Avenue
Bus. 565 Fifth Ave., N. Y.
Proposed by Samuel L. Londner

Marder, Israel
Married Stationery & General Mdse.
Res. 1478 Prospect Place
Bus. 77 Nassau Street
Proposed by K. Karl Klein

Salop, Claire
Unmarried
Res. 1026 President St.
Bus. 510 Lincoln Place
Proposed by Mrs. S. P. Goldberg

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS OF GIFTS

We gratefully acknowledge receipt of the following gifts:

CENTER LIBRARY

Mr. Barnet Smallene.
League for Labor Palestine
Mrs. Brown.
Mr. and Mrs. Sol Sussman, in honor of the Bar Mitzvah of their son.
Mr. Joseph Goldberg.
Mr. Hans Von Holdt.

PRAYER BOOKS

Mrs. Irene Goodman, in memory of her late father, Reuben Goldstein.

TALEISIM

Mr. and Mrs. I. Levingson, in honor of the birth of a daughter to their children.

Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Rinzler, in honor of the birth of a daughter to their children.

PROFESSOR PAUL KLAPPER TO ADDRESS CENTER ACADEMY DINNER

The Board of Trustees of the Center Academy has arranged that the evening of Wednesday, May 26th shall be the occasion for a dinner, a festive assembly of parents, teachers and friends of the school.

The occasion will be in the nature of a celebration of another year of highly successful school activity, to review the work that has been done, and to hear of plans for the future.

The guest of honor will be Professor Paul Klapper, Dean of the School of Education of the College of the City of New York, prominent author and an eminent teacher of teachers. Recently Professor Klapper, upon the invitation of the school board, undertook a survey and evaluation of the work of the school. He will summarize his findings in the course of his address that night.

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
MAY 20th**

The next meeting of the Board of Trustees is scheduled for Thursday evening, May 20th at 8:30 o'clock. Matters of great importance will be discussed.

**SISTERHOOD BOARD MEETING
MAY 27th**

The Board of Directors of the Sisterhood of the Center will hold its next meeting on Thursday afternoon, May 27th at 1:30 o'clock.

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THOMAS MANN ON THE JEWS

(Continued from page 4)

fortunate and false yearning for unity with the rabble, confusing the people with the rabble, stooping to the mob in lowering themselves to the service of lending intellectual spirit to mob slogans. They have dishonored themselves and deserve nothing better than the pitiable role they now play under the lash of the rabble. The mob is not ennobled through this self-betraying reinforcement by the intellectuals; it is only the opposite which occurs: the spirit is degraded and gives itself up into slavery. That is what experience teaches.

The aristocracy of the intellect is a necessity, a far more justifiable necessity than the wretched craving for superiority, which at present, among other things, finds expression in vulgar anti-Semitism. Not unaptly some one described Fascism as the Socialism of the stupid. Indeed, vulgar anti-Semitism is the aristocracy of the rabble. It can be brought down to a very simple formula: "I must admit that I am nothing, but I am at least not a Jew." The lout believes thereby to be after

all somebody. Anyone, however, who is anything at all does not need so negative an advantage to prop himself up in his own eyes.

I hereby profess the profound aversion that I have always felt toward anti-Semitism. This aversion has strengthened itself into abhorrence in the same measure in which those base instincts that formerly, at least, stood under the corrective pressure of good custom, have taken the upper hand, have in some places even become official, and have come into a position where unrepressed they can turn their miserable wish-dreams into deeds.

This is a revolting sight to anyone who is aware of what German Jews have achieved both receptively and creatively for the culture of their so-called host-land (*Wirtzland*) but which is as much their homeland as it is of any of their non-Jewish compatriots. It is revolting especially to the German man of letters who has personally experienced the assistance, furtherance and benefit for literary endeavor

brought by the sympathy and understanding of the Jewish part of its public toward German culture.

The Jews are called the people of the Book. We must be aware of all the sensitiveness, receptivity, spiritual maturity, knowledge of suffering, love of the spiritual which is here symbolically implied in the word Book in order properly to understand the debt of gratitude which especially in Germany the literary spirit owes to the Jews. It was Goethe who uttered enbittered but resigned appreciation: "A German man of letters means a German martyr." This is an immemorial experience. And only those fail to sense it who are not men of letters at all but merely people who write.

If ever anything had the power to moderate and soothe this strange martyrdom (usually borne with equanimity or even a certain acquiescence) it has been precisely the participation of the Jewish spirit in German culture. Every one, even the greatest men of letters, admitted this. Speaking of Goethe's relation to the Jews, Riemer says: "The educated among them were more complacent and enduring in their

(Continued on page 20)

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THE COMING ZIONIST CONGRESS

(Continued from page 6)

proposed to work out a *modus operandi* by which all groups might unite for common Zionist aims, while at the same time preserving their separate ideologies for partisan purposes. The Territorial Union has not caught the fancy of the Zionist world. So far, it has been a failure. The Congress must find a substitute. The Congress indeed must sow the seeds of harmony where now there is only the dragon's teeth of discord.

So much for the Congress. In the three months before it convenes there is work to be done in America. We have referred to the potency of public opinion. It is the considered thought of the leaders of Zionism in America that the greatest factor in the solution of the political problems facing the Congress will be the unification of American public opinion in favor of an honest interpretation of the Mandate. That cannot be brought about by oratory. It can be effected only by a tremendous registration of shekel holders enrolled to vote for delegates to the Congress and pledged to an expressed sympathy with Zionism. It must be made obvious by the public opinion of America, acting as a catalytic agent on the public opinion of Great Britain, that the 4,000,000 Jews of America are unitedly and tremendously interested in the proper and successful development of the Jewish National Homeland.

This can be done if, and only if, the election is participated in by at least 500,000 voters in America. It is therefore the duty of every Zionist (nay, more, of every Jew who has any feeling of responsibility towards Jewry) to see to it that his efforts will tend to the enrollment of many others as registered voters (who, incidentally, must be so registered before May 28th, 1937.)

The lines of division in Jewry today are sternly drawn by the compulsion of events in the face of which individual philosophies such as assimilation can have no vital force. The choice is almost literally one between physical survival and destruction. There will be time for the niceties of definition and distinction only when safety is assured. That safety for millions of Jews lies only in the uninterrupted development of the Homeland. The duty of all Jews is to labor unremittingly in the form indicated, to

fashion the materials, actual and spiritual, for such development.

May none of us be recreant to this duty!

CONSERVATIVE JUDAISM

(Continued from page 8)

worship. There should be encouragement of modern liturgical compositions. But the authority of these new forms will depend upon their ultimate wide acceptance. Till then, our new creations will necessarily have the status of localized "minhagin." There is no doubt that when the Yishub in Erez Yisroel becomes imbued with a modern intense religious awareness, its new forms and institutions will find quicker and wider acceptance in the galuth.

From the foregoing one can see that Conservative Judaism must stress an intensive Hebraic education with emphasis on Palestine and Jewish nationalism and with a view to developing a balanced emotional and rational religious outlook. It must teach reverence for the Bible and Talmud together with a discriminating sense of the difference between history and folklore, as well as between the higher and lower stages of religious and ethical sensitivity found herein. It must encourage and cultivate in the child and in the adult a functioning God consciousness which will help to make for self-discipline and for aesthetic religious life. It must inculcate respect for Jewish law together with a sense of discrimination between those laws which are vital and significant and those which are not essential. In the case of the latter, we must remember that even the ashes of our burnt devotions in the Temple were treated with reverence. There never was a time when life made it possible for Jews to meet all the demands of the Halachah. Since it is ridiculous to attempt to cut the cloth of the law to meet the particular situation of each and every individual, we must stress those channels of Jewish life which offer the richest opportunity for the spiritual life. We need not fear lest the rite eclipses the right since our God emphasis must be inextricably rooted to ethical sensitivity.

It is my firm conviction that if Conservative Judaism develops along these lines, it will restore God to Israel and Israel to God. It will also assure the further organic evolution and growth of Jewish life.

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THOMAS MANN ON THE JEWS

(Continued from page 18)

admiration not only of his person but also of his writings, than his coreligionists. As a rule they show a more pleasant attention and a more flattering sympathy than does the National-German. And their easy receptivity and penetrating intellect as well as their peculiar wit make him a more sensitive public than one is apt to find among the sometimes slightly slower and more clumsy true-and-only Germans."

That is a nice characterization, erring a little and superficially in expression but yet very apt and suggestive in the term "more sensitive public" and that of the "true-and-only-German." In that word we find a characteristic uneasiness and discomfort which every culturally oriented human group—and especially the German—feels when confronted with the "nothing-but-German," with Germany as a purely folk-product which has never been and never will be sensed as an element promoting culture or friendly to it.

The Catholic Church is really right when in order to reply to certain anti-Christian stupidities and crudities, it declares to the Germany of today: that it was only with the advent of Christianity that the German entered the ranks of the leading cultural peoples. That is undeniably true. With Christianity, however, came a Mediterranean-Oriental element not German, which the Germans from time to time and repeatedly attempt to deny. Each time such denial resulted in a relapse into barbarism, into something which is pre-historic and not yet German, only tribally Germanic. And an earmark of this relapse which has always been a temptation of the German (just as it was temptation for the Jews to relapse into the pre-Mosaic, the merely Canaanite) has always been anti-Semitism.

To be sure, even if there were no Jews in Germany, the Mediterranean-European-Oriental element, the really humane and universal element would be irrevocably one with all that is German history, with all of German culture. The Jews, however, represent in the German sphere the spiritual element, physically, racially, physiognomically, I might say personally. What is usually termed their intellectual component is nothing but this Mediterran-

ean-European element which is also part and parcel of, altogether inalienable from German morals and culture. The hatred which breaks out from time to time against the Jews is not at all aimed at the Jews alone; it is aimed against Europe and all that is higher in Germany itself; it is the impossible attempt to oust from the body of German culture an element felt to be somber and alien despite the fact that it is actually the very element which enlightens, gives form, is human: in other words, the Mediterranean element whose racial representatives in Germany are the Jews. Anti-Semitism is the need of breaking through to a most wretched, reactionary, fruitless "freedom" and independence, arrived at only after the bonds of civilization have been shaken off—without which there would be no Germany in any higher sense of the word.

What I am telling you here is not new: others, greater men, have said it before, and even I myself have expressed the same thing as far back as it seemed to me necessary to do so. The cultured German, educated in the spirit of Goethe and for whom according to the words of his master, "the only problems of importance are those of culture against barbarism"—he *cannot* be an anti-Semite and must deny to himself any part in this cheap folk-amusement; for he senses with accuracy that the very fundamentals of his own world are here at stake: the Christian-Classical basis of Occidental civilization, along with everything that rests therein in European thought and ethics: ideas of freedom, truth, right and humanitarianism. In serener times these ideas lose some of their pathos; and the mind, fundamentally sure of their immorality, may treat them lightly and even with irony. But in so severe an epoch as the present, in times of war, as one might say, they resume all their exacting and decisive seriousness. A man must either recognize them, or deny them—and he, who denies them, is I am convinced, a lost spirit and a lost soul.

And we must in all this consider not only the fact, that the Jews are as great a historical factor in the intellectual constitution of Europe as were the Greeks; which consideration keeps men like me so definitely removed from any form of anti-Semitism. We must further keep a lively sense of the importance and the indispensibility of the Jewish spirit to the *present* and the future of the continent.

DON ISAAC ABRAVANEL BORN 500 YEARS AGO

(Continued from page 8)

ligious point of view. He tried to interpret the words of the Holy Books from the social and political sides as well, thus anticipating the modern commentators by a few centuries. He, also, made extensive use of, and often quoted the Christian Exigetes like Jerome and St. Augustine. For this reason, perhaps, he has a considerable influence on the later Christian translators and commentators of the Bible. He also displays good literary sense and critical insight in providing every book of the Old Testament with an introduction in which he analyzes the contents of the book and makes some valuable comments. A fault that can be found, however, is that he is inclined to be prolix. At one point he departs from the accepted Jewish tradition and follows the Christian practice of placing Daniel among the prophets. This is done probably to strengthen his argument for the appearance of the Messiah at a certain time, inasmuch as the book of Daniel forms the basis of his Messianic Eschatology.

Statesman, exigete, financier, philosopher, idealist and practical man of affairs—such is the description in brief of Don Isaac Abravanel. In character he was noble, generous and sincere. If one were asked by what qualities the future generations will remember this unusual man the answer might be that he will not be remembered for his philosophy. Mediaeval philosophy, even at its best—except from an ethical and theological standpoint—is no longer a living issue; it is only of scholastic interest. Abravanel will be remembered chiefly for his heroic spirit and manhood. If he had chosen, he could have remained in Spain, rich and honored. Others in high positions among whom was his friend and colleague Abraham Senior, chose the latter course, though at the price of renouncing their Judaism. Not so, Isaac Abravanel. He risked everything to remain with his brethren, partaking of their hardships and sorrow and experiencing their dangers and sufferings. One must pause in admiration before such a man and exclaim in eulogy: here is a hero, a true Prince of Israel.

JEWISH EVENTS REVIEWED

(Continued from page 12)

Anti-Jewish propaganda, fostered by Nazi forces, is spreading in Argentina. Much literature, urging boycott of all Jews and Russians, is being distributed in Buenos Aires.

* * *

Although German charitable and cultural institutions are exempt from taxation, the German Supreme Court in Leipzig has placed Jewish institutions of that character in a different category. The court denied such exemption to these institutions on the ground that they did not benefit the German people.

In the Freudenstadt district the Nazi government has succeeded in completely wiping out the extensive cattle trade previously carried on by Jews there. This has been accomplished by the Nazis' inducing all the insurance companies in the district to refuse to insure any cattle purchased from Jews or through Jewish agents, and all the banks to refuse to lend money to purchasers of such cattle from those sources.

Professor Frank, of Heidelberg University, is touring Germany for the special purpose of lecturing to officials on the "Ways of Jewry." He is to furnish them with "scientific reasons" for removing Jews from public life and for justifying Nazi anti-Semitic activities. This mission is necessitated by the failure of the crude methods of the blatant Jew-baiters to influence the more educated and higher officials.

* * *

Although it has authoritatively been denied that the Italian government intends to institute an anti-Jewish policy, Fascist attacks on Jews and Zionism are increasing with alarming intensity. In a book, "The Jews in Italy," by Deputy Paolo Orano, a University professor and a prominent member of the Fascist party, Zionism is violently attacked as being "anti-Italian." It is said there that the establishment of a Jewish National Home in Palestine is inconsistent with the interests of Italy in the Mediterranean. The author declares that "Zionism in Italy is absurd and undesirable, for it brings Italian Jews in contact with the Jews in liberal and democratic countries. It is impossible to be a good Italian and a Zionist." In the *Tevere*, a pro-Nazi paper, racial legislation against per-

sons of Jewish blood is demanded. It has published a list of 1600 Jewish families in Italy which, it says, "may be of service at the present moment." One of its articles urging racial legislation has been reproduced in the *Quadriello*, an extreme Fascist organ.

* * *

Major Broadhurst, former Chief of the Palestine Police, speaking on "Ten Years in the Palestine Civil Service," declared that he had never known a single case of cruelty to children by a Jew, that there was very little crime or drunkenness in the all-Jewish city of Tel-Aviv, that there were no idlers in that city, and that the Jews had transformed Palestine from a desert into an oasis.

* * *

An intensive campaign is being prosecuted in London to provide for the religious education of young Jewish girls. Organizations, including the Jewish Religious Education Board and the Union of Hebrew and Religion Classes, are providing facilities for instructing thousands of Jewish girls in their religion so as to prepare them for their duties as Jewish wives and mothers and to enable them to retain their position in the community as self-respecting Jews in the face of anti-Semitic influences.

* * *

In Warsaw, the anti-Semitic Endek Party sponsored business concerns for the purpose of driving the Jews out of business. As a supposed aid, these concerns exhibited signs to the effect that they were not Jewish. Many of them, however, found their business decreasing and a large number closed. Their association, consequently advised them to remove the "non-Jewish" signs.

* * *

An orthodox Jewish agricultural and handicraft training school has been established in Sweden. It is intended to prepare young Jews for Palestine settlement and practical life generally. A group of young Chutzim is connected with the school. The institution is operated on a non-profit basis, being subsidized by the Jewish communities in Stockholm and Goteborg and by private individuals.

* * *

In the recent Bucharest municipal elections, thirty-six seats were at stake. A very vigorous campaign was waged

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by anti-Semitic parties. Not a single seat, however, was won by them.

* * *

Dr. E. Moses, a prominent Jew, has been elected Mayor of Bombay. He is the third Jew to occupy this office.

* * *

An anti-Jewish article published in an organ of the Salzberg Teachers' Union was denounced by the local Society of Catholic Teachers as being "out of keeping with the true Austrian spirit."

* * *

Defamation of Jews by the Algerian press may cease if the promise of M. LeBeau, Governor-General of Algeria, is carried out. The Governor-General informed a delegation of Algerian Jewish leaders that legislation is being enacted to prohibit the malicious expression of opinion with respect to religious connections, views, honor and liberty of the individual.

ABRAVANEL'S ROSH AMONAH

(Continued from page 8)

these things belong not to the fundamental doctrines, therefore he omitted them there; the question arises, why did he name them among the "Principles of the Law," while he mentions no other commandment? If they belong to the principles of the Law, why did he omit them among the cardinal doctrines?

The third objection is this: Of all the thirteen fundamental doctrines, and the principles of the Law, he counts only two among the divine commandments, viz: the existence of the Deity and His union, to which he adds: "And the knowledge of these things is a positive divine commandment." So he also counts them in his book on the "Number of the Divine Commandments." None of the other doctrines or principles is counted among either the positive or negative commandments. This is very strange. If those indeed, are fundamental doctrines and principles of the Law, which one must believe, how is it that God did not command us to do so? Again if we are at liberty to believe or disbelieve them, it is a plain contradiction to what he says, that every believer in religion must believe them. We can not remove this objection by the supposition that Maimonides like Chisdai thought cardinal principles are no objects of option, while commandments must be left to our free-will to obey or disobey them, therefore he did not count them among the commandments;—for he counts the existence of the Deity and His unity on both sides, also among the commandments. Nor can it be maintained that he counts not all cardinal doctrines among the divine commandments, because he did not find passages in Scriptures where they are commanded;—the third doctrine, that God is no corporeal being is based by Maimonides himself upon a passage of Scriptures, viz: "And ye shall be very careful for the sake of your lives, for ye have not seen any similitude," &c., and the ancient doctors already said *Hishshomer* (used in this passage, *I'en* and *Al*) in the law denote a prohibitory commandment. Why then did he not count this among the divine commandments? The same is the case with the doctrine of God being the first and primitive cause of all entities which is said plainly in Scriptures: "For in six days God made heaven and earth," &c.; the same is

the case with the doctrine that God only should be worshipped, as Scriptures say, "And ye shall serve the Lord your God;"—the eternity of the Law, which doctrine he bases on the scriptural passage: "Ye shall not add thereto, nor diminish thereof." Why then did he omit these doctrines among the divine commandments founded on Scriptures, especially as he mentions other commandments based much less on the Bible?

The fourth objection is this: Why does he begin his book *Madda* in speaking of the first doctrine to be "The principle of all principles, and the pillar of all wisdom," when he should have said, "One of the first principles is to be in the existence of the Deity." What is it to us in a theological respect, whether this is also the pillar of all secular wisdom? He uses this phrase neither in his commentary to the *Mishna*, nor in his book on the commandments. I must also object to the words he uses in that connection, "Therefore His truth (of his existence) has no similarity to the truth of any creature." There is no need for this passage.

The fifth objection is this: He writes in the third paragraph of *Madda*, "This Essence is the God of the world, the Lord of all the earth, and He is the Moving Power of the uppermost orbits," &c. This idea, however, that the First Cause is the moving power of the uppermost orbits, has no connection with the existence with the Deity and the necessity of His existence. Philosophers have spoken much on this topic. Maimonides in his *Moreh*, said many contradictory words on this matter, as I have remarked in *Atereth Sekenim*, a work which I wrote in my youth. Why then did he take this doubtful demonstration to explain the first principle, and why made he no mention thereof in his commentary, to the *Mishna*, or his book on the commandments. The evidence of the existence of the Deity being based on the perpetual motion of the celestial bodies, actually refers to the eternity of matter, which Maimonides never believed. Therefore I ask, why is this mentioned in *Madda* and no where else, if it was necessary to support this first principle?

The sixth objection is this: Maimonides on the "Principles of the Law" on expounding the unity of God he finds it difficult to prove it, therefore

resorts to the indirect evidence by the premise of God's being incorporeal, and the motion of the orbits which is an evidence for the existence of God according to Maimonides, and not for His unity. Another question is, why does he not quote, as a proof of God's unity, the scriptural passage: "For the Lord he is God in heaven above and on earth beneath there is none beside," which he quotes as proof for the existence of the Deity, while it actually proves His unity? Still another question is this: He says in the book *Madda* in explanation of the first principle: "Whoever believes in a Deity beside the One true God trespasses the Law, 'Thou shalt have no other gods before me.'" This commandment, however, is directed against the plurality of gods or polytheism, therefore Maimonides should have mentioned this after he stated the doctrine of the unity of God, and not as he does after he mentioned the doctrine of the existence of the Deity. If the belief in the existence of the Deity is a divine command its opposite is not to believe in another god; its actual opposite is atheism.

The seventh objection is this: He says in the first place that God is the absolute and necessary existence, he counts, 2 He is One, 3 He is incorporeal, 4 He alone is primitive. Theosophists expounded already that the dogma of God's being the necessary and absolute existence necessarily includes His being one, incorporeal, no body and no force in the body, eternal without beginning or end; for without these qualities the necessary and absolute existence of God can not be imagined. It therefore follows that the first doctrine includes the three following next, so that they need not have been mentioned at all.

The eighth objection is this: He counts among the cardinal doctrines the belief in the resurrection of the dead, taken from the *Mishna*: "And these have no portion in the world to come, who say the resurrection of the dead is not taught in the Law," &c. But according to this *Mishna* the principal belief is not the resurrection of the dead, but that this doctrine is taught in the Law. Therefore the sages of the Talmud exerted themselves to prove that the Law teaches this doctrine, as they do in the section called *Hilek*. The question against Maimonides then is, why did he make belief in the resurrection the fundamental doctrine, and not, as his sources do, the belief that the resurrection is taught in the law?

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ALONG THE BORSCHT CIRCUIT

(Continued from page 4)

a comic, who excruciates the guests on the porch by wearing funny hats and falling into the swimming pool.

This staff puts on some sort of show in the Casino every night. Sometimes the shows are stolen from recent Broadway hits, but no one seems to catch on, and if they do no one cares. A typical week goes like this:

Monday, game night; Tuesday, marshmallow roast around a camp fire; Wednesday, concert; Thursday, novelties, probably a "Topsy Turvy," in which the men dress as women, and vice versa; Friday, dramatics, with the lifted scripts; Saturday, a musical revue, featuring spicy blackouts, and Sunday, a general get-together, for hellos to new guests and good-byes to departing ones.

The season runs ten weeks, from July 1 through Labor Day, with Memorial Day week-end the tryout period. Like Mr. Ross, Miss Levy sometimes finds the resort owners a bit trying. She has no use, for example, for the owner who looks over an aspiring social director and says, blunt-

ly, "Well make me laugh." She has seen strong men wilt under such treatment. She is also dubious of an owner who asks how many suits a prospective employee possesses.

"That may be important," she said, "but what about talent?"

Besides borscht, which is a gift of a *Variety* linguist, the circuit is known as the Smetena Farms (after the Jewish dish of sour cream) and the Al-pineers Round (because the camps are in the mountains, although no one seems eager to climb them).

"To be a success in the mountains, you have to have looks, talent and sex appeal," said Chubby Lentz, unself-consciously. Mr. Lentz has been a success in the mountains himself for the last eight years and he has every expectation of repeating this summer, when he will be at the Hotel Brickman, at Fallsburg, N. Y.

"You have to be a good mixer. The men guests love to be able to call the prima donna 'dearie,' and if she don't like it, she gets the gate. Also, the girls regard us men as personages from the theatrical world, and we have to be nice to them. Sometimes that's hard, and sometimes it isn't. The

management likes you to dance with the girls and take walks with them at night. The only time the management kicks is when you dance with only one girl. The management does not approve of your concentrating yourself like that.

"Lots of the guests are stenographers and clerks who try to crowd a year of romance and adventure into a two-week vacation. That is tough on the staff, because we have to keep up with every group that comes up for two weeks. I figure we live about twenty years each summer.

"You get plenty of laughs, though. Personally, the honeymooners hand me the biggest laugh. I make it a point to sit around talking with them in the evening. Around 11 the guy starts looking at the girl, or the girl starts looking at the guy, but I keep right on talking. Sometimes I have kept a honeymoon couple sitting in the lobby until 3 o'clock in the morning, just talking. That is worth a laugh any day."

At many of the resorts, particularly the less ambitious ones, the performers double up as waiters, busboys, swimming instructors and night clerks.

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